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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/698,337	10/31/2003	Johnny M. Hickman	18794-00062	9687

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EXAMINER

SELLS, JAMES D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1734

DATE MAILED: 12/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/698,337

Applicant(s)

HICKMAN ET AL.

Examiner

James Sells

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 September 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Faherty (US Patent 6,701,993) in view of Fukushima et al (US Patent 4,681,645).

Faherty discloses a sealing system. As shown in the figures, materials 16 and 20 are positioned in seal frame 12. Seal plate 30 (applicant's claimed welding tip), comprising sealing surface 32, bead 34, and heater 50 with heating elements 52 is lowered to heat seal the materials together in the manner claimed by the applicant. See col. 2, line 42 through col. 3, line 35.

However, Faherty does not disclose the knurls as claimed by the applicant. Regarding this difference, the applicant is directed to the reference of Fukushima et al.

Fukushima discloses a method and apparatus for ultrasonic welding. As shown in Fig. 1, welding horn 19 cooperates with plate anvil 28 to weld portions of tube 11 together. At col. 2, lines 48-54, Fukushima discloses knurls 24 on horn 19. These knurls allow the horn to better engage and weld the materials.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to employ knurls on the working surface of a welding plate, as taught by Fukushima et al, in the apparatus of Faherty in order to allow the seal plate to better engage and weld

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the materials. In addition, it is the examiner's position that without the disclosure of unexpected results, the specific configurations (i.e. tapered, conical, threaded bolt, etc.) claimed by the applicant are within the purview of one having ordinary skill in the art and would have been obvious to employ in the device of Faherty in order to facilitate welding of various materials.

Regarding claim 1, it is the examiner's position that the knurled welding surface disclosed by the device of Faherty in view of Fukushima described above has the same structure as applicant's claimed invention and thus *inherently* provides varying high and low temperature points in the perimeter in the manner claimed by the applicant.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Telephone/Fax

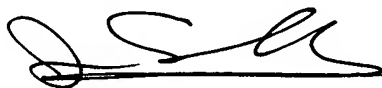
4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James Sells whose telephone number is (571) 272-1237. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday between 9:30 AM and 6:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Chris Fiorilla can be reached at (571) 272-1187. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.



**JAMES SELLS
PRIMARY EXAMINER
TECH. CENTER 1700**